GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:158
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2015
Green Energy in Telecom Towers
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the increasing use of diesel by telecom companies for operating telecom towers is contributing to noise and air pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the quantum of diesel used in the telecom towers along with the remedial action taken thereon;

(c) whether telecom operators including Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited are planning to instal solar and wind turbine generators for operating mobile signal towers;

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the number of towers powered by the green energy so far, State and operator-wise; and

(e) the details of rules and guidelines put in place by the Government for the telecom service providers in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.158 FOR 9th December, 2015 REGARDING "GREEN ENERGY IN TELECOM TOWERS".

(a) In general, the primary source for powering the telecom tower is grid supply and whenever, grid power is not available, Battery system is used as the first backup. After exhausting battery system, DG (Diesel Generator) set is used as second backup. So, the diesel is used only when grid power is not available and battery system is exhausted. As per DoT guidelines, the DG set used for telecom towers meet the prescribed norms of emission and noise limits.

Further, a report on "An approach towards Green Telecom" dated 12.04.2011 by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) report mentions that the total emission of the Indian telecom industry is expected to be around 1% percent of the country"s total CO2 emissions.

(b) As stated in (a) above, the diesel is used in mobile towers by second backup i.e. DG set only when the grid power is not available and battery system is exhausted. So, the diesel consumption is need based.

The quantum of diesel used by Telecom Service Providers is not monitored by the Government. However, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in its report "An approach towards Green Telecom" dated 12.04.2011 stated that "Assuming 8 hours of operation by DG sets, the average fuel consumption would be 8760 liters of diesel every year per tower, and the total carbon emission on account of diesel use by telecom towers is estimated to be 10 mt (million tonnes) of CO2 for 4 lacs telecom towers."

Further, DOT is encouraging Telecom Service Providers to use Renewable Energy Technology (RET) solutions and energy efficient equipments.

(c) & (d) The Telecom Service Providers including Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited are installing solar & wind projects for mobile towers. However, they have intimated that there are certain constraints in installation such as non-availability of suitable & clear south facing space, rental issues for roof-top space, lack of local eco system in rural/ remote areas etc.

The Telecom Service Providers including Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited have executed around 4000 of Renewable Energy Technology (RET) projects including solar & wind projects till 2014.

(e) The guidelines for greening of the telecom sector and to achieve reduction in carbon emission are annexed.